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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ABUJA 001356

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W, INR/AA
DOE FOR GEORGE PERSON

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PM](#) [KCOR](#) [NI](#)
SUBJECT: NIGERIA: FONMIN ON NIGER DELTA, EFCC

REF: A. SILSKI-SANDERS 07/10/08 E-MAIL (NOTAL)
[1](#)B. ABUJA 1332
[1](#)C. SECSTATE 70257 (NOTAL)
[1](#)D. ABUJA 1331
[1](#)E. ABUJA 1312
[1](#)F. ABUJA 1347

Classified By: Political Counselor Walter Pflaumer for reasons 1.4. (b & d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY. Ambassador met with Nigerian Foreign Minister Ojo Maduekwe on July 11 to demarche on Zimbabwe (Refs A and B). She also took the occasion to execute requested demarche on the Niger Delta, and address U.S. concerns over recent redeployments at the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) (Refs C and D). FonMin noted that Niger Delta Summit and Gambari's role were badly handled, said that GON is looking for an international role on oil bunkering like the Kimberley diamond process, highlighting that a "name and shame" program would decrease demand for bunkered oil. The Ambassador pointed out our reservations on the effectiveness of a process like this and noted the electronic bill of lading idea. The Ambassador told FonMin that we are watching the recent EFCC redeployments closely to judge any negative impact on the institution's capacity, and that we want the EFCC to continue to move in the direction of increased transparency and improved efficiency. FonMin said he would raise these concerns with EFCC Chairwoman Waziri during a courtesy call she has requested. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Taking advantage of a July 11 meeting to present a demarche on Zimbabwe (Refs A and B), the Ambassador also delivered a requested demarche on the Niger Delta (Ref C). FonMin was accompanied by Senior Special Assistant to the President on Foreign Affairs Amb. Thaddeus Hart, Director of the Office of the Honorable Minister of Foreign Affairs (OHMFA) Emmanuel Ogunnaike, and Deputy Director of OHMFA Sola Enikanolaiye. Ambassador was accompanied by PolDeputy (notetaker).

DELTA: GON PLANS, USG ASSISTANCE

[1](#)3. (C) Ambassador noted recent reports that the much-touted Niger Delta Summit (a cornerstone of the GON Delta policy) may be delayed yet again by the removal of UN envoy Ibrahim Gambari as chairman of the Niger Delta Summit Steering

Committee (Ref E). Ambassador voiced concern that the process will be further slowed or, worse yet, stalled. While we understood Nigeria's concerns to protect its own sovereign rights, we urged the GON to change its thinking on the Delta to include the international ramifications of its actions (or inactions).

¶4. (C) The Ambassador noted that several offers of USG assistance, some under the Gulf of Guinea Energy Security Strategy (GGESS) process, had remained unanswered -- some for up to a year. The Ambassador outlined the types of assistance we have offered, including stockpile security management, weapons tracing, aerial surveillance of petroleum platforms, and training/equipment programs, some of which would be fully-funded USG assistance and others of which could be done on a reimbursable basis. FonMin asked for details on unanswered offers of assistance; Ambassador agreed to send more information. (Note: Ambassador sent an Aide Memoire later that afternoon outlining USG offers.) FonMin also asked Senior Special Assistant to the President on Foreign Affairs Hart to check with the Ministry of Defense to see what is holding up responses on these USG offers.

¶5. (C) The Ambassador asked for clarification of recent public statements from President Yar'Adua referencing a proposal to reduce oil bunkering, and also what the President's vision was on addressing this issue. FonMin said the GON is looking into a process similar to the Kimberley diamond process. Such a "name and shame" program could significantly reduce bunkering by reducing demand, he argued. The Ambassador encouraged the GON to look as well at international oil companies' proposal for electronic bills of lading, which could be used to verify the origin of petroleum, and added that the USG had its doubts about any Kimberley-like process on oil.

EFCC: NEW CHAIRWOMAN, NEW STAFF

¶6. (C) The Ambassador noted USG and broader international concern that the recent redeployment of EFCC staff could seriously affect the institution's capacity to fight corruption (Refs C and D). She noted that some of the individuals redeployed had received donor-sponsored (including USG) training and that with these mass redeployments, some of the capacity built up over years at the EFCC would be lost. FonMin said he understood USG concern. He confided that EFCC Chairwoman Waziri had inherited some staff with prejudices and questionable loyalties when she took over. He commented that the controversy left by the changes at the EFCC is "highly unfortunate," as it has "left a trail of injuries." With any controversy, he admitted, there are costs; he expressed his hope that the operational capacity of the EFCC would not be among those costs. The Ambassador reiterated the importance of supporting the EFCC as an institution, without regard to personalities.

¶7. (C) FonMin told Ambassador he had just received a courtesy call request from Waziri. He noted that, whenever he had taken over a new office, he had always been told that he must have "his own team." His own experience, however, was that keeping those with experience in the organization is much more useful, and that they then become loyal employees as well. He told Ambassador he will meet with Waziri and share his experience with her, and also mention U.S. concerns. (Note: In a subsequent meeting between Ambassador and Waziri, these concerns were also raised. Waziri said that she had found case files lacking evidence, leaks to the press by certain individuals, and an unwillingness to truly improve the EFCC from many of those she is redeploying, noting that to date the press has highly exaggerated the numbers. End note.)

SANDERS